

Shared RCM Assistance for Local Governments

What is a Resource Conservation Manager?

A Resource Conservation Manager (RCM) is a designated individual who supports a local government energy and resource efficiency program. The RCM's sole focus is to bring about reductions in the expenditures for energy, water, natural gas, fuel oil, solid waste disposal and other utilities. This is done through improved use practices, greater attention to utility billings and the installation and use of resource management equipment.

Why should cities and counties be interested in an RCM program?

Many local governments have not had the staff time or expertise needed to address resource waste in their facilities. The reduction of energy or other utility costs can free up valuable funds for basic

government services and help achieve community energy and environmental goals.

Has this approach been successful in the public sector?

School districts in the Northwest were the first to adopt this approach and many have RCM programs that have been successful since the early 1990s. During the first years of a RCM program, typical savings reach 10 percent of utility costs. Puget Sound Energy supports successful RCM programs in the private sector and at a number of public sector agencies. There are over 75 RCMs in Washington right now.

What is the WSU Extension Energy Program offering?

The Washington State University (WSU) Extension Energy

Program, in cooperation with the Department of Commerce, will support the creation and successful implementation of new RCM programs. Many local governments would like to have an RCM program, but do not have utility bills large enough to make it cost effective to dedicate someone to it. The approach will be to create a shared RCM position that will serve several local governments in a geographic area.

How will the WSU Extension Energy Program help cities and counties?

We plan to offer assistance with:

- Identifying potential partners
- Organizing start-up of the local program
- The hiring process
- Training for RCM and other staff
- Energy accounting software and training
- Ongoing technical and program support

Will local governments get funding assistance?

Yes, incentive/funding will pay for part of the RCM salary for the first and second years. Once the program is established, it is expected that resource savings will help pay for the position in later years.

How will the WSU Extension Energy Program choose who receives assistance?

Areas will be targeted where there are currently no RCM programs and there is potential to serve several local governments. Program details are still being refined. Let us hear from you about how to support a successful program.

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What types of shared programs will receive assistance?

While the focus is on counties and smaller cities, any county or city is eligible for assistance. A combined effort will make the program more cost effective. For example, several cities, a county, and potentially other government entities (e.g., school district or port) could join together to create a local RCM program.

The intent is to create a shared RCM program for local governments that currently have combined annual utility expenses of at least \$1.5 million. This includes the participants' electricity, natural gas, transportation fuel, water, solid waste, and recycling costs.

Schedule for program implementation:

September 2009 –
Begin training potential candidates for RCM positions

Fall 2009 –
Recruit and begin working with local governments

January 2010 –
Program infrastructure in place

2010–2011 –
Continue training, as well as program and technical support

For more background on resource conservation management, visit www.energy.wsu.edu/projects/rem/rcm.cfm.

This program is a part of the Washington State Department of Commerce statewide Energy Planning Program. Final details and program schedule are draft – pending approval of the Department's application to the U.S. Department of Energy. Compliance with Recovery Act requirements including Buy American, Davis-Bacon Act and reporting will apply.



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